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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/423,981	02/18/2000	SHOGO MURAMATSU	991304	7398
23850	7590	10/22/2004		
ARMSTRONG, KRATZ, QUINTOS, HANSON & BROOKS, LLP 1725 K STREET, NW SUITE 1000 WASHINGTON, DC 20006				
			EXAMINER SAVAGE, JASON L	
			ART UNIT 1775	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 10/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/423,981

Applicant(s)

MURAMATSU ET AL.

Examiner

Jason L. Savage

Art Unit

1775

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 August 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mori et al. (US 6,090,497) in view of Kawagoe et al. (US 5,864,745) as evidenced by the admitted Prior art.

Mori teaches a coated member wherein the coating is a wear resistant Al-Si alloy having a content of Si from 26-80 weight % and further containing fine Si particles from 0.01 to 10 μm dispersed therein (col. 2, ln. 27-37). The wear resistant coating may also contain additional materials such as 0.05-10%Mg, 0.5-10%Cu, 0.1-20% Sn, and between 0.05-15% of Mn, Fe, and/or Ni (col. 3, ln. 1-8; col. 3, ln. 65 - col. 4, ln. 9). Mori further teaches that the wear resistant coating which is formed by thermally spraying is suitable for compressor parts such as in automobiles (col. 5, ln. 44 - col. 6, ln. 3).

Regarding the limitation that the thickness of the coating is between 10 to 500 μm , Mori exemplifies an embodiment wherein the coating thickness is 300 μm (col., 6, ln. 19-24 and col. 7, ln. 39-44).

Regarding the limitation that the ratio of the short-diameter to long diameter Si particles is 1/3 or more, the particles in Figure 1 of Mori appear to fit well within the claimed ratio as most of the particles appear to be more rounded in shape.

Regarding the limitation that the alloy contain some particles having a size greater than 10 μm , Mori teaches the particles in the comparative example are as large as 20 μm (col. 9, ln. 24-25). Also, the teaching of Mori that particle sizes greater than 10 μm are undesirable because it causes unfavorable acceleration of abrasion of a counter material (col. 4, ln. 20-22) shows that Mori has produced an alloy having some particles greater than 10 μm . All the disclosures in a reference must be evaluated for what they fairly teach one of ordinary skill in the art even though the art teachings relied upon are phrased in terms of a non-preferred embodiment or even as being unsatisfactory for the intended purpose, *In re Boe*, 148 USPQ 507 (CCPA 1966); *In re Smith*, 65 USPQ 167 (CCPA 1945); *In re Nehrenberg*, 126 USPQ 383 (CCPA 1960); *In re Watanabe*, 137 USPQ 350 (CCPA 1963). Furthermore, the claim does not require that all of the particles are greater than 10 μm , Applicant has failed to show how having a limited number of particles greater than 10 μm in size would provide a patentable distinction over the prior art.

Regarding the limitation that the flame-spraying method used is HVOF, HVOF is a well known method of thermal-spraying. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have used any known method of thermal-spraying, including HVOF to have applied the aluminum-alloy coating. Furthermore, the HVOF process does not provide a distinction over other flame-spraying methods since Applicant admits on page 5, lines 28-29 of the Specification that various flame-spraying methods can be employed to form the claimed aluminum-alloy. Finally, HVOF is a process limitation, when there is a substantially

similar product, as in the applied prior art, the burden of proof is shifted to the applicant to establish that their product is patentably distinct not the examiner to show that same process of making, see *In re Brown*, 173 U.S.P.Q. 685, and *In re Fessmann*, 180 U.S.P.Q. 324.

Regarding the limitation that the flame-spraying is performed under a half-molten state, the admitted prior art on page 3, lines 1-10 of the specification state that thermal spraying is defined as "material is converted to molten or half-molten state" (emphasis added). Flame spraying the material under a half-molten state would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art since Mori teaches thermal spraying and the definition of flame spraying includes material converted to a half-molten state. As such, Mori is viewed to teach material converted to half-molten states.

Regarding the limitation that the alloy contain primary Si and eutectic Si particles, eutectic particles would have inherently been formed by the method of Mori but Mori does not teach that the alloy also include primary Si particles. However, Mori does teach that primary crystal particles contribute to the improvement of the wear resistance of the alloy (col. 1, ln. 23-30). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have included some amount of primary particles in the alloy of Mori since it is well known to thermally spray materials under a half-molten state which results in the formation of primary particles and since Mori teaches that primary particles contribute to the improvement of the wear resistance of the alloy. Furthermore, the claim does not require any minimum or maximum amount of primary or eutectic particles and Applicant

Art Unit: 1775

has failed to show how having a limited number of primary or eutectic particles would provide a patentable distinction over the prior art.

Mori does not teach the roughening of the substrate surface; however, it is well known in the art to roughen the substrate surface in order to improve the adhesion of the overlying coating. Kawagoe teaches a flame sprayed aluminum silicon alloy (col. 13, ln. 5-7) as well as shot blasting the substrate to roughen the surface before applying the wear resistant coating (col. 15, ln. 59 - col. 6, ln. 31). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have roughened the surface of the substrate prior to applying the wear resistant coating of Mori in order to have increased the adhesion between the substrate and the coating.

Regarding the limitation that the flame-sprayed aluminum alloy has adhesive strength of film higher than that of a flame-sprayed Ni film, such an adhesive strength would have been inherent. The Patent and Trademark Office can require Applicant to prove that prior art products do not necessarily or inherently possess characteristics of claimed products where claimed and prior art products are identical or substantially identical, or are produced by identical or substantially identical processes; burden of proof is on Applicants where rejection based on inherency under 35 U.S.C. § 102 or on prima facie obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103, jointly or alternatively, and Patent and Trademark Offices inability to manufacture products or to obtain and compare prior art products evidences fairness of this rejection, *In re Best, Bolton, and Shaw*, 195 U.S.P.Q. 431 (CCPA 1977).

Art Unit: 1775

Regarding the material ranges in claim 3, although the weight percentages of the additional materials are not within the exact same ranges claimed by Applicant, all of the material ranges taught by Mori overlap the material ranges claimed by Applicant which obviates claim 3.

Regarding claim 4, the average granular particle sizes in the alloy of Mori would be well within the range of less than 50 μm .

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mori et al. (US 6,090,497) in view of Kawagoe et al. (US 5,864,745) as evidenced by the admitted prior art as applied to claims 1-4, and in further view of Wilkosz et al. (US 5,655,432).

Mori and Kawagoe teach what is set forth above but it does not teach a layer covering the outer surface of the wear resistant coating. However, it is known in the art to coat wear resistant components with lubricating coatings in order to improve the seizure resistance during dry conditions.

Wilkosz teaches an aluminum-silicon swash-plate compressor which has a coating comprising a PTFE resin and lubricating particles such as carbon and MoS_2 dispersed therein (col. 3, ln. 38-60). This coating reduces the friction of the swash-plate and increases its durability (col. 3, ln. 5-8).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have used the lubricating or friction reducing coatings of Wilkosz on the exterior surface of the coating taught by Mori as modified by Kawagoe in order to have

improved the seizure resistance and to increase the durability of the swash-plate compressor, particularly during dry conditions.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments filed 8-30-04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that Mori does not teach or suggest the structure claimed by applicant containing the granular and primary particles in the alloy. Applicant cites the teaching in Mori of a cast structure as being prior art and therefore construed to avoid formation of the unmelted Al-Si structure. Applicant also cites the disclosure in Mori that "Si is forcedly solid solubilized in Al matrix" as teaching away from the alloy containing unmelted Al-Si structure.

As was set forth previously, all the disclosures in a reference must be evaluated for what they fairly teach one of ordinary skill in the art even though the art teachings relied upon are phrased in terms of a non-preferred embodiment or even as being unsatisfactory for the intended purpose. As evidenced by the admitted prior art, Mori's disclosure of flame spraying incorporates the teaching of depositing material in unmelted states which form primary particles. Mori also teaches that primary particles are known to provide improved wear resistance. As such, it would have been within the purview of one of ordinary skill in the art to recognize that the formation primary particles in the alloy could be achieved by the flame spraying process of Mori and that the inclusion of such primary particles may result in improved wear resistance of the alloy. Furthermore, the claim does not require any minimum or maximum amount of

or eutectic particles and Applicant has failed to show how having a limited number of primary or eutectic particles would provide a patentable distinction over the prior art.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

4. Any inquiry to this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Jason Savage, whose telephone number is (703)305-0549. The Examiner can normally be reached Monday to Friday from 6:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, Deborah Jones, can be reached on (703)308-3822.

Art Unit: 1775

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Jason Savage

10-13-04



DEBORAH JONES
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER